

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6519
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C O N F I D E N T I A L LISBON 5662

E.O. 11652: GDS
TAGS: MARR PO
SUBJECT: LAJES NEGOTIATIONS

REF: (A) STATE 182780, (B) LISBON 5470

1. I ASSUME IT IS CLEAR TO WASHINGTON THAT, GIVEN THE CURRENT GOVERNMENT CRISIS, THERE CAN BE NO MOVEMENT HERE ON THE LAJES QUESTION. ALTHOUGH THE SECOND CONSTITUTIONAL GOVERNMENT REMAINS IN OFFICE TECHNICALLY, IT IS DOING SO UNDER PROTEST AND WOULD NOT UNDER SUCH CIRCUMSTANCES MAKE ANY DECISIONS ON AN IMPORTANT PIECE OF BUSINESS LIKE THE LAJES ACCORD.

2. HOWEVER, I BELIEVE IT IS USEFUL TO PUT ON RECORD WHERE THE NEGOTIATIONS STOOD ON THE EVE OF THE CURRENT PAUSE. THE COUNCIL OF MINISTERS AND THE PRESIDENT HAD APPROVED A NEGOTIATING POSITION BY WHICH PORTUGAL WOULD ACCEPT A NINE-YEAR AGREEMENT (DATING FROM FEBRUARY, 1974) AND A QUID OF \$140 MILLION. POTENTIALLY TROUBLESOME DETAILS HAVING TO DO WITH LABOR RELATIONS AND OTHER TECHNICAL ARRANGEMENTS WOULD NOT, AS THE AZOREANS HAD BEEN URGING, BE SPELLED OUT IN THE RENEWAL, BUT WOULD BE LEFT FOR
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NEGOTIATION BY JOINT WORKING GROUPS POST-SIGNATURE.

3. THESE ARE SUBSTANTIALLY THE SAME TERMS THAT STATE HAS RECOMMENDED TO THE PRESIDENT AND WHICH HAVE BEEN QUESTIONED BY OMB (REFTEL A). THE GOP, HOWEVER, WOULD LIKE TO SPLIT THE QUID \$100 MILLION FOR ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE TO THE AZORES (CONTINGENT UPON THE AZORES'

ABILITY TO USE IT ALL) AND \$40 MILLION TO MILITARY ASSISTANCE, WHILE STATE HAS RECOMMENDED AN 80-60 SPLIT.

4. I HAVE INFORMALLY LET IT BE KNOWN TO THE FOREIGN MINISTRY AND PRESIDENT EANES THAT WE MIGHT HAVE DIFFICULTY WITH A 100/40 SPLIT (REFTEL B). HOWEVER, I CANNOT EXPECT TO RECEIVE ANY REACTION TO THAT BIT OF ADVICE IN THE ABSENCE OF A FUNCTIONING GOVERNMENT. ONCE WE SEE WHAT SORT OF GOVERNMENT REPLACES THE CURRENT LAME-DUCK ONE, WE CAN ASSESS THE PROSPECTS OF MOVING THE LAJES BUSINESS FORWARD.

5. INCIDENTALLY, THE JULY 25 MEETING AT WHICH THE FOREIGN MINISTRY WAS TO SEEK AZOREAN CONSENT TO THE GOP'S PROPOSED TERMS WAS CANCELLED BECAUSE OF THE GOVERNMENT CRISIS. BLOOMFIELD

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